



February 10, 2021

State Superintendent Joy Hofmeister  
State Department of Education  
Oliver Hodge Building  
2500 N. Lincoln Boulevard  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Dear Superintendent Hofmeister:

Re: Oklahoma Academic Standards Review

On behalf of Decoding Dyslexia Oklahoma, we would like to express our support for the revisions to the Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts. Decoding Dyslexia OK is an organization consisting of parents and teachers who support students with dyslexia in Oklahoma. Our mission is to (1) raise awareness for dyslexia, (2) empower parents through education to advocate for the needs of their children, and (3) work with policy makers to improve resources for students with dyslexia in our schools.

Decoding Dyslexia OK appreciates the commitment to continuous improvement from Superintendent Hofmeister, the staff of the Oklahoma State Department of Education, and the members of the State Board of Education as it relates to the Oklahoma Academic Standards. As we review the revisions to the ELA standards, we are excited to see:

- A focus on the Foundational Reading Skills in PreK – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- An expansion of Phonemic Awareness Skills through third grade
- A new strand to address Spelling/Encoding skills
- An expansion of the use of multimodal literacies
- A clear concise format that will be easier for parents and teachers to reference

Thank you for the opportunity to review the standards, we appreciate the process that has involved stakeholders to offer feedback as revisions were being considered. We support the approval of the Revised Oklahoma Academic Standards, and look forward to seeing students benefit from the newly revised standards. Thank you for your service to Oklahoma's children and families.

Respectfully,

*Michelle Keiper*

Michelle Keiper (Feb 18, 2021 12:19 CST)

Michelle Keiper  
Founder & State Leader  
Decoding Dyslexia OK

*Tiffany Jenkins*

Tiffany Jenkins, CALT  
State Leader  
Decoding Dyslexia OK

[www.decodingdyslexiaok.org](http://www.decodingdyslexiaok.org)



*The* UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA®  
*World Literature Today/Latinx Studies Program*

22 January 2021

Oklahoma State Department of Education  
2500 Lincoln Blvd.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Dear Oklahoma State Department of Education:

It is a pleasure to write in support of the revised Oklahoma English Language Arts standards being submitted to the Oklahoma legislature for approval in February 2021. We have read the revised standards in draft form and have had ample occasion to think about their direction and potential impact. We believe that the revised standards will raise the level of student preparation in the ELA areas, and we are pleased to anticipate the enhanced knowledge base and sophistication that will be evident in students coming from Oklahoma high schools to attend state colleges and universities to study literature and language arts. We applaud the vision of the ELA team at the Oklahoma State Department of Education and have great regard for the work that went into revising these standards. We are eager to see those standards adopted and believe that everyone in the state will benefit from this work to set more comprehensive standards for educating tomorrow's young leaders.

The signers of this letter were witness to the new direction in state ELA standards that began in 2015. We were impressed then with the rigor of what we saw and the way that the new standards would better prepare students to be citizens, advanced learners, and participants in the work force. We especially noted the way that the new ELA standards focused on contemporary multi-media texts and the needs of contemporary students to decipher digital texts. The standards did an amazing job of identifying ELA skills that would enable students to encounter any number of new texts as well as be prepared to interpret emerging texts arising in the culture. The Oklahoma standards are endeavoring to create competencies for the twenty-first century and to make sure that students who graduate from Oklahoma high schools will be effective citizens in the world.

As we now understand the potential impact of the revised ELA standards, we see once again that we can anticipate seeing better prepared and more culturally aware students in the English courses that we teach at our two universities. Students graduating under the revised standards will be knowledgeable about English grammar and rhetoric but also about multi-media texts projected to different ethnic communities that are emerging in digital environments and making new demands on those seeking to understand them. We are excited about being professors for such students and believe that the quality of common education in our state will continue to be lifted.

The revised standards being presented for approval help to focus on what was already good about these standards and make them even more effective. We applaud the commitment to provide all students with literary representation, the chance to explore their own heritage, and the space to speak and write with their authentic voices. The renewed focus on equity and inclusivity is welcome and necessary. The revised standards will emphasize preparing students to read analytically across genres, modes, and cultures, while writing for various contexts, audiences, and purposes. This emphasis aligns with the goal of developing “informed citizens who can contribute to the common good.”

We believe that the revised standards will encourage students to develop multiple competencies appropriate for the world in which they will be leaders and decision makers. These standards specifically promote anti-racist perspectives and encourage students to focus on and value diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The ongoing development of ELA standards in Oklahoma public education is a source of pride for state teachers and education administrators. We applaud your work and will look for as many ways to support it as we can. Thank you for valuing the education of students in the state and for taking the time to make ELA standards as supportive, humane, and effective as possible.

Sincerely,

Robert Con Davis-Undiano  
Executive Director, WLT  
Neustadt Professor  
Presidential Professor  
Inductee--Oklahoma Higher  
Education Hall of Fame (2018)

Laura Bolf-Beliveau  
Professor of English  
University of Central Oklahoma

Anastasia Wickham  
Associate Professor of English  
University of Central Oklahoma

Rilla Askew  
Assoc. Professor of English  
University of Oklahoma

Matthew Hollrah  
Professor of English  
University of Central Oklahoma

Roxanne Mountford  
Chair and Prof. of English  
University of Oklahoma

February 10, 2021

State Superintendent Joy Hofmeister  
State Department of Education  
Oliver Hodge Building  
2500 N. Lincoln Boulevard  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Dear Superintendent, Hofmeister:

Re: Oklahoma Academic Standards Review

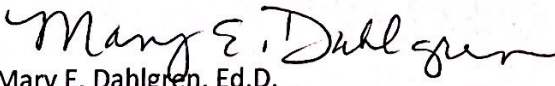
On behalf of Tools 4 Reading and Mary E. Dahlgren Consulting, I would like to offer support for the revision of Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts that have been updated by Oklahoma educators and stakeholders. As you know, I've supported Oklahoma's efforts to increase literacy achievement on behalf of all children and am excited about the guidance offered in the updated Standards. I am pleased to see these Standards support educators in using evidence-based literacy practices grounded in the science of reading to improve learning outcomes for all children.

Building the capacity of teachers and other educators to work together to effectively teach all children to read well is a requisite to improving student learning. Upon review, it is good to see Oklahoma is aligning with the science of reading by increasing the focus on Foundational Reading Skills and particularly phonemic awareness through third grade. These foundational skills are critical to the success of proficient readers and writers. The addition of Spelling/Encoding skills and expansion of the multimodal literacies is also impressive. Getting our students off to a good start to become critical readers and writers will set Oklahoma on a path to success in school, business, and life.

I congratulate the ELA team at the Oklahoma State Department of Education and the leadership they have offered in getting these revisions in place. I am eager to see the Standards adopted and believe that everyone in the state will benefit from this work to set higher and more sophisticated Standards for educating our children.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this feedback. I look forward to supporting teachers in our state as they implement the Oklahoma Academic Standards. Please extend my thanks to all of the educators who worked hard to update these after listening to feedback from many. Thank you for your service to Oklahoma's children and families.

Sincerely,



Mary E. Dahlgren, Ed.D.  
President, Tools 4 Reading



## Oklahoma Council of Teachers of English

February 8, 2021

Oklahoma State Board of Education  
2500 North Lincoln Blvd.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Honorable Members of the Oklahoma State Board of Education:

Please allow this letter to serve as support for the revised English Language Arts Standards for the state of Oklahoma. The Oklahoma Council of Teachers of English is an organization that promotes improvement in the teaching of all phases of the English Language Arts, including reading, writing, thinking, and speaking; therefore, we affirm that these standards meet these needs not only for our students but also for our educators.

From the beginning, our Oklahoma Academic Standards have included educators at virtually every stage of the process and this revision cycle is no different. As contributing members of these conversations, we were provided opportunities to evaluate and discuss how vital it is that all ELA standards, especially reading and writing, are not thought of as separate entities, but integrated as pieces that must be aligned to help students demonstrate and achieve mastery. Additionally, it is easy to see alignment among the standards and the grade levels, which models the recursive nature of learning and showcases the value of developing strong foundational skills in ELA.

These revised standards will go far in helping to educate the youth of our state. Thank you to all the Oklahoma teachers and leaders who made these revisions as your leadership and dedication to centering youth learning continues to be an inspiration to all.

Respectfully,

Dr. Jennie L. Hanna

Dr. Jennie L. Hanna (Feb 18, 2021 11:06 CST)

Dr. Jennie L. Hanna, President (2020-2021)

Dr. Lara Searcy, Immediate Past President (2019-2020) Lara Searcy, Ph.D.-NBCT

Lara Searcy, Ph.D.-NBCT (Feb 18, 2021 11:09 CST)

Oklahoma Council Teachers of English

**Oklahoma Council of Teachers of English (OKCTE)**

Website: [okcte.org](http://okcte.org) | Twitter: @oklacte, #OKCTE | Facebook: okcte

OKCTE is a proud affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of English





University of Oklahoma College of Education  
338 Cate Center Drive, Room 190 Norman, Oklahoma 73019  
Phone: (405) 325-2873 Fax: 405-325-7841

February 1, 2021

Oklahoma State Board of Education  
2500 North Lincoln Boulevard  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Honorable Members of the Oklahoma State Board of Education:

The Oklahoma Writing Project (OWP) is pleased to support the 2021 revision of the Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts. Along with streamlining the resources for teachers, one of the strengths of the revision is the tightened vertical alignment, making sure standards build on each other to ensure student mastery. Some standards have been removed or combined, providing stronger focus and increasing clarity. The content of the standards continues to be rigorous and requires students to engage in analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and creativity beginning in pre-kindergarten. In addition, the document is clearly written and user-friendly for all stakeholders. OWP is confident application of these standards will ensure students are prepared for workplace and college success.

Teachers across grade levels, representing the OWP professional community, reviewed the revised standards and provided feedback to strengthen the document. Throughout the development and revision of the standards, we have appreciated the process of involving the teachers across the state in the continuing development of the standards. A core belief of OKWP is that some of the most effective professional development involves teachers teaching teachers. The State Department team is to be commended for working from this premise, rigorous standards developed by and for teachers.

The Oklahoma Writing Project, a site of the National Writing Project, has been part of the University of Oklahoma since 1978. OWP serves teachers of writing at all grade levels, pre-K through university, and in all subjects. The mission of the OWP is to develop teacher leaders and to improve student achievement in writing and literacy in Oklahoma's schools, technology centers, and colleges. We believe every student deserves a good teacher of writing. Over the last five years the OWP has provided over 1,200 program service contact hours and reached over 8,000 teachers through our activities that include a summer institute for teachers, professional development to schools, and youth, family, and community activities.

Sincerely,

*Crag Hill*

Crag Hill (Feb 18, 2021 10:50 CST)

Dr. Crag Hill  
OWP Site Director

*Audra Plummer*

Audra Plummer (Feb 19, 2021 15:39 CST)

Audra Plummer  
Co-Director for Inservice

*Shelly Unsicker-Durham*

Shelly Unsicker-Durham (Feb 19, 2021 15:41 CST)

Shelly Unsicker-Durham  
Assistant to the Directors



## WRITING PROJECT

330 Willard Hall  
Stillwater, OK 74078  
405.744.8830

February 18, 2021

To the Oklahoma State Board of Education,

The Oklahoma State University Writing Project (OSUWP) is pleased to support the revision of the Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts. These new content standards not only reflect the rigor we expect in English Language Arts education, but also represent a move towards more cultural inclusion and guidance on genre diversity. OSUWP is encouraged by the focus on preparing Oklahoma's PK-12 students to become "independent writers" and "informed citizens." We feel these standards will aid teachers in developing curriculum to meet their students' needs and support students in reaching their goals for future success.

The visual style and helpful appendices within the revised Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts make the document accessible for Oklahoma educators and other stakeholders. OSUWP also appreciates the inclusion of multimodal literacies, as well the cross-curricular connections to disciplinary literacy standards with Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, and World Languages. These connection promote diverse approaches to teaching and learning within the English Languages Arts.

The Oklahoma State University Writing Project, a local site of the National Writing Project, has served Oklahoma teachers and students for nearly 30 years with professional development in writing and literacy education. Working with teachers from all grade levels and content areas, we focus on improving writing instruction, technology integration, and developing teacher leaders who are writers that share their own stories and expertise. We offer sustained professional development to districts, teachers, students, and community members through summer institutes, workshops, and youth writing camps.

We appreciate the opportunity to review the Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts and the Oklahoma State University Writing Project supports the current revision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Shanedra D. Nowell'.

Shanedra D. Nowell, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Secondary Education  
Director, Oklahoma State University Writing Project



February 12, 2021

Superintendent Hofmeister and State Board of Education,

As members of the English Language Arts Consortium, we would like to express our full support for the new Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts. Many members of the consortium have been an active part of the collaborative and rigorous revision process. The team carefully analyzed and reworked standards to ensure a high quality and a competitive academic experience for all Oklahoma students. The new standards have also been reviewed and revised by stakeholders, including a diverse group of teachers from various districts across the state of Oklahoma and represented by members of the consortium .

The proposed standards are concise descriptions of the knowledge and skills expected of students at each stage of their education necessary to prepare students for college and career readiness. The new standards continue to value the inclusivity of “race, ethnicity, culture, and all perspectives that reflect the richness of the human experience” as well as “the development of informed citizens who can contribute to the common good” through English language arts education.

Collectively, we realize the value of building strong foundational reading skills required for students to learn to read before 3rd grade when they reach the critical juncture of “reading to learn.” Standard 2 includes updates that strengthen foundational literacy skills, including the recursive process between reading and spelling which is based on the most current scientific research supporting reading and writing proficiency. Ensuring reading sufficiency in Kindergarten to 3rd grade through achievement of the new proposed standards will significantly reduce the need for remediation in later grades, lower the risk of student dropout due to an inability to read, and propel students forward into rigorous literary success.

Additionally, the secondary standards have been updated in order to give teachers more specific direction in the area of grammar and mechanics, this will support our secondary students in their performance on college entrance exams such as the ACT and SAT. Standard 5 now offers detailed and vertically aligned objectives in order to “expand and apply knowledge of grammar, mechanics, and style to comprehend texts



and communicate effectively.” While Standard 5 has always supported grammar instruction, these changes are notable because they provide clarity to teachers at every level as they build on the specific skills in a seamless linear progression from year to year.

We look forward to the impact and opportunities that the new Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts will have on instruction for all Oklahoma teachers and students as we await legislative approval.

Respectfully,  
Members of the English Language Arts Consortium

Gay La Carmichael, Grove Public School (Shawnee)

Amber Elder, Putnam City Schools

Julie Enlow, Sapulpa Public Schools

Lisa Geniesse, Mustang School District

Mava Goddard, Glenpool Public Schools

Jennifer Hanson, Edmond Public Schools

Ginger Howe, Moore Public Schools

Tracy Hunt, Oklahoma City Public Schools

Natalee Morgan, Broken Arrow Public Schools

Sharon Morgan, Oklahoma City Public Schools

Ann Rosales, Norman Public Schools

Sarah Seymore, Norman Public Schools

Ranee Staats, Putnam City Schools

Adrienne Turner, Deer Creek Schools

Kristen Uhrmacher, Enid Public Schools

Tiffany Walker, Mid Del Schools



January 25, 2021

Superintendent Joy Hofmeister  
State Superintendent of Education  
Oklahoma Board of Education  
2500 North Lincoln Boulevard  
Oliver Hodge Building  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Re: Oklahoma Revised English Language Arts Academic Standards

Dear Dr. Hofmeister,

As public librarians, we are pleased to endorse the revised Oklahoma ELA Standards. The changes align with current research on how language acquisition and proficiency is built. We especially appreciate the emphasis on diverse voices and multimodal literacies which better reflect the growing information landscape and diverse communities through which students will be required to navigate. We believe these standards will continue to provide educators with the necessary tools needed to not only advance curriculum development but also boost student learning and the acquisition of language arts and skills needed to excel in the future. We appreciate the opportunity that was given to community stakeholders to review and provide feedback on the revised standards.

We look forward to continuing to support educators' and students' informational and recreational needs through our collections, programs, and other library services as they explore these new standards.

Sincerely,

Annie Emmons, Engagement Manager, Belle Isle Library

Gloria Melcher, Children's Librarian, Capitol Hill Library

Robin Miller, Children's Librarian, Northwest Library



January 23, 2021

Oklahoma State Board of Education  
Oliver Hodge Building  
2500 North Lincoln Boulevard  
Oklahoma, Oklahoma City 73105

Dear Honorable Members of the Oklahoma State Board of Education,

As English educators in Oklahoma, we would like to express our support for the newly revised Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts. We appreciate the efforts made from the beginning of this process to procure teacher input. Content specialists and teachers worked tirelessly to ensure that the standards reflect the development of a rigorous and complete approach to educating our children. As a result, the standards embody the curriculum needed to assure the future success of our students in the workforce and higher education.

To master ELA skills, lessons and activities are recursive instead of touching upon one standard and “checking the box.” Furthermore, ELA skills encompass such variety (i.e. grammar, vocabulary, writing, speaking, listening, reading, and more); thus, it is hard to pinpoint specific, easy-to-identify linear steps similar to other subject areas like math or science, making designing the standards a complicated challenge. However, the sequencing of the newly revised standards is easy to understand. This document demonstrates how seamlessly all eight of the standards work together and how, so often, there is a need to call upon multiple different “English” skills to be able to complete a task/assignment.

These standards are broad enough to allow for creativity and to enable educators to respond to student needs while still being specific enough to offer definitive guidance to practitioners.

In reference to the grade level we both teach (tenth grade), we offer these specific, comparative observations:

- The **new introduction** for each grade level provides clarity.
- The **appendix information under the new introduction** provides clear and appropriate guidance while still allowing autonomy both on the district and classroom levels.

- The addition of the genre chart in **Standard 2 (Reading & Writing Process)** is very helpful; additionally, the standard's writing principle is clear and allows students and teachers to more easily move through the writing process with focus.
- **Standard 3 (Critical Reading & Critical Writing)** is broader yet specific and is much more applicable to HOW we tackle literature; also, the inclusion of "defensible thesis" is an excellent addition of rigor.
- The addition of mastery grades in **Standard 5 (Language)** is incredibly useful for students and teachers.
- The addition of a viable research question in **Standard 6 (Research)** is timely and necessary.
- The new succinctness of **Standard 7 (Multimodal Literacies)** makes it more accessible to assess.
- Independent reading and writing (**Standard 8**) is still clearly valued and expected.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



[Dionne Liebl](#), State Teacher of the Year Top 10 Finalist-2017



[Gena Beeson](#), District Teacher of the Year-2018

*Home of the Antlers*

6101 N.W. 206<sup>th</sup> – Edmond, Oklahoma 73012

405.348.5720 (o) – 405.359.3179 (f)

# WMS



## WEATHERFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL – Home of the Eagles

Doug Gunselman - Principal  
Chris Farris- V. Principal  
Lindsay Mickley - Counselor

509 N. CUSTER  
WEATHERFORD, OK 73096  
580-772-2270  
Fax 580-774-1981

January 15, 2021

Dear Members of the Oklahoma State Board of Education,

I respectfully submit my endorsement for the revised Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts. These standards have been carefully developed and reviewed by a team of educators who have worked tirelessly to provide a skill set that is both realistic and rigorous for Oklahoma classrooms.

These eight standards are familiar to ELA teachers, and the format has been reviewed and improved to ensure clarity, consistency, and depth of knowledge. The panel who worked to develop and revise these standards has worked diligently to seek input and to provide a user-friendly set of standards that the classroom teacher can readily apply.

As a middle school teacher, I can appreciate the efforts extended to develop standards that will build a bridge from one learning level to the next. In the past year, our students and teachers have faced unique challenges maintaining a stable and consistent learning environment. These standards represent a stable foundation on which to build our expectations for both the present and the future.

Much diversity exists among our rural and urban districts. Educators everywhere want what is best for our students. These standards certainly provide a pathway to achieve that goal.

Please give your full consideration to adopting these standards. They go far in giving us all a clear vision, moving forward.

Sincerely,

A black and white photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pat Lightfoot".

Pat Lightfoot  
WMS reading teacher  
2020 Teacher of the Year finalist